

TALES BRIEFLY TOLD.

During the funeral of an unpopular man in a New England village, a stranger having asked of the sexton: "Who's dead?" and "What complaint?" the sexton replied: "There is no complaint; everybody is satisfied."

"I meant to have told you of that hole," said the kindly host to his friend, who had suddenly disappeared in the course of a stroll through the grounds into a pit full of water. The friend climbed out and shook himself. "It doesn't matter," he said, cheerily, "I found it."

John G. Carlisle, who has a farm on Long Island, was discussing with his foreman the advisability of putting on a new man. "No," said the foreman, "I wouldn't bother to take on Frank. He wouldn't suit." "Why not?" "Well, because you couldn't place no dependence on his stickin' to the job. He's such a freckle-minded cuss he never stays at any one thing."

It was a new voluntary and the organist had been going through it for the first time. After she had finished the organ blower asked her if it had gone all right. With some surprise the young woman answered: "Oh, it went very well, thank you. But why do you ask?" "Well," said he, "I had never blown to this piece before, and I was rather anxious about it."

An Irishman traveling in France was challenged by a Frenchman to fight a duel, to which he readily consented, and suggested shillelahs as weapons. "That won't do," said the Frenchman's second. "As challenged party you have the right to choose the arms, but chivalry demands that you should decide upon a weapon with which Frenchmen are familiar." "Is that so?" replied the Irishman, coolly. "Very well, we'll fight with gullotines."

FOREIGN NOTES OF INTEREST.

Brazil's foreign funded debt exceeds \$230,000,000.

The cholera is now almost extinct in Turkish territory.

Of the 1,400 earthquakes that occur every year in Japan, only 50 are noticeable.

For various misdemeanors, 64 school-boys in Berlin were condemned last year to imprisonment for from two to ten months.

Statistics show that the birth rate in the largest German towns is steadily decreasing, notably in Berlin, Charlottenburg, Hamburg and Crefeld.

A British regiment recently landed in Southampton after 20 years' service in India. Only six men of the regiment that sailed from England returned with it.

Seventy men had a fishing competition at Dover, England, recently, under the auspices of the Sea Anglers' association. They fished five hours and the prize for the heaviest fish was taken with a whiting, turning the scale at six ounces.

Pickpockets and swindlers are multiplying in Madrid at a startling rate, and they carry on operations in the principal streets and squares, under the eyes of the poorly paid policemen, many of whom are suspected of being their accomplices.

Six duels were fought as the result of the assault on Gen. Andre by M. Syveton, in the French chamber of deputies. No harm was done, as the duellist who was the worst hurt was able to ride away from the field of honor on his bicycle.

Possibly.

"I wonder what he ever saw about her that attracted him?"

"Perhaps the \$50,000 worth of diamonds and pearls with which her parents had decorated her."—Chicago Record-Herald.

CORN FIELDS ARE GOLD FIELDS

to the farmer who understands how to feed his crops. Fertilizers for Corn must contain at least 7 per cent. actual

Potash

Send for our books—they tell why Potash is as necessary to plant life as sun and rain;

The Dawn of the Year.

Beside the gate of opening year,
While looking at its prospects fair,
I wish you every blessing, dear,
Whose beauty haunts me everywhere;
My heart goes out with throbs of pain—
Desecrating deep the heavens above—
That you may every gladness gain,
With purest joy and smile of love!

Ah! sweet as rose that greets the June,
Is your heart's love, I surely know,
And like the springtide's rhythmic rune
The world's that from your presence flows—
A deeper than the deepest sea—
All higher than the sky above—
Is love my darling holds for me,
Within the kingdom of her love!

Beside the portals of the year,
I wish you plenty of grace,
May all the world befriend you, dear,
And bless the beauty of your face;
For like a song of ecstacy,
Like tender tones of cooing dove,
Are you my soul's delight and pride,
The queen of all my heart can love!

New Year's Day in China

By
Rev. Frederick Poole.



The Chinese boys and girls—especially the boys—get lots of fun out of their yearly festivals, and the littleurchins look forward to their holiday times with as much glee and happiness as does Young America to the Fourth of July, Decoration day, Washington's Birthday, Christmas and New Year's.

There is the Lantern Festival, when all turn out to witness the brilliant display, for the whole country is ablaze with the light of thousands of paper lanterns made in all sorts of fancy shapes. Then there is the Moon Festival, when they worship the moon, and the little pig-tailed boy and his chubby, small-footed sister look up and see, not a man, but a teardrop in the moon; for there is a story of a beautiful Chinese lady who drank some medicine which would keep her free from death, and then went to the moon, where she was turned into a toad, and ever since the Chinese have seen a "toad in the moon."

But perhaps the chief reason why the little folks in China look forward to the Moon Festival is because they get all they want of those little moon-shaped cakes which are made only for this occasion. They are very prettily decorated, but oh! so awfully indigestible that the next day the little fellows who are suffering from stomach ache are apt to think that there was a toad in the cake instead of the moon.

The Chinese boys and girls may never have heard of George Washington and the holiday we keep in memory of the Father of his Country, but they know all about the wise and good Chinese official who lived about 450 years before our first Christmas, and who was scolded and degraded by an ungrateful emperor, so that in sorrow and disgrace he drowned himself. Well, his body was never found; and so, to keep his memory, the Chinese, once a year, ever since, have had a Dragon Boat Festival, and the children go out in swarms to see the long boat processions on the rivers, and to watch the offerings of rice and other foods as they are placed on the waters for the benefit of the spirit of the lost minister of state.

But the great day of all days for the children in China is New Year's Day. I think, if you were to ask a little Chinese boy what he meant by "New Year's," he would say: "Noise, and plenty of it." For weeks the Chinese are preparing for this great event. Houses are cleaned, and the shopkeeper looks forward to it with great satisfaction, because he knows that his customers, if they have any self-respect, will be sure to pay their debts before the new year; for it is considered a great disgrace to start the new year in debt.

The Chinese know nothing about Christmas, because, you know, that beautiful holiday belongs only to Christian countries.

By the way, boys, ask your father

the shops are all closed for one or two weeks, for it is unlucky to do business during the birth of the new year (except at the back door—but don't say anything about this).

Then, too, we Americans could wall along the streets for once in the year feeling sure that nobody would curse us, or call us "foreign devils," for it is unlucky to use that bad word at such a happy time. Dear me, how I wish that New Year's would last 12 months!

But the first day has come, and the little Chinese children get ready to enjoy it for all it is worth. They are dressed in their best and gaudiest clothes, which are only worn on this occasion. The father has got from the pawn shop his finest silk gowns, which that obliging "relative" has taken good care of during the past 12 months, and, thus splendidly attired, the proud father and his little boys start out on a little visiting trip to his relatives and friends, to "Kunf Hi, Fah Tsai,"—wish them a happy new year and many riches.

"What," you say, "don't the little girls go, too?"

No; they must stay at home, because the little girl is not so important as her brother, and, besides, she would have difficulty in walking far in her tiny "golden lily" shoes, which do not measure more than three inches in length.

But what a day it is for the little boy! He has already got his first present when Santa Claus, that is to say, the boy's father (same thing, you see, in this country), gave him a little string of copper cash tied on a red cord; for it is unlucky to start the New Year without any money in your pocket, and that is something both you and I agree with— isn't it?

But our little Chinese boy could never carry home all the money that is given to him, for it is the custom for every one whom he visits to give him presents of money, as well as candy and cakes. Of course, the father takes charge of this—I mean the money—and I have often wondered if his little son ever sees his money presents again. I really think that a little Chinese boy must be a good investment for his father on New Year's Day in China.

But the visiting is soon over, and then the little Chinaman is off, sometimes with his sister, to see the sights in the streets. They look at the peep shows and the Punch-and-Judy shows—which, by the way, is a Chinese invention. They spin their tops and fly their kites, until the sound of gongs and drums tells them that there is a theater or a juggling show somewhere near, and off they go, and soon are to be found in the front row, clapping their hands in childish glee at the funny antics of the performers, until the man comes round with the hat, and then there is a patter of small feet as the youngsters scurry away, for the Chinese boys have no use for the hat—like some other boys I know.

But twilight finds the tired little folks at home, for they are afraid to be out at dark; and little John Chinaman closes the day in eating sweetmeats, or in taking his turn at beating the unmusical gong, or in diving among the mass of red paper in the courtyard, where the fireworks were let off by his father and his brothers, in search for unexploded single crackers, which he at once puts to their proper use, until, tired out with his day's exertions, he is put to bed, and is soon sound asleep, dreaming of cakes and candy, copper cash, and Punch-and-Judy shows, and "Cr-cr-cr-crack—bing—bang—boom!"—Sunday School Times.

The Old and the New Years

By
Josephine C. Goodale.

THE OLD YEAR.

The Old Year, struggling in death's cruel throes,
Lies dead and languished in the darkening night,
Reluctant soul, to take his final flight,
Within his hand, with drops of mortal woes
Dripping, behold the cup full well he knows
He pressed to lips of strong men in their night.

Why, vanquished, fell in life's relentless fight,
In irony of fate, the weakening rose,
His promise unfulfilled of proud career,
To death he deemed the youth, ah, cruel fate!

And spared the old, who longed and prayed to die,
This is thy record, O thou dying year!
Vain is thy suppliant cry to Heaven! Too late.

In ashes of repentance thou must lie.

THE NEW YEAR.

Welcome, thrice welcome, O thou blithe New Year!
Thou comest smiling from the rosy sky,
Thy form alight with grace and dignity;
Within thy hand a scroll; we need not fear:
To read what shall in lives of gold appear
Light in thy eyes, to us a surety
Of happier days; and so we follow thee,
Humbly to meet the smile, bravely the tear.

Why should we not, glad year, be born anew,
Leaving behind the old, dead chrysalis,
To mount, on wings of ethereal heights,
Unknown?

Yen kindly sun the scattered gems of dew
In basket stores, the needy earth to bless
Thy garnered gifts shall by our hand

One New Year's Day

By Eliza Armstrong Bengough.

"GOOD morning, Mrs. Smithson. Did you have a pleasant New Year's day?"

"Well, No, Mrs. Naylor, to tell the truth, I didn't. You see, Mr. Smithson and I concluded we would not spend the day with his family, as usual. We thought we would remain cozily at home and have a nice long talk. Since he has been kept so close at the office and I have been out so much, we don't seem to see nearly as much of each other as we used, and New Year's day seemed just the time to get acquainted all over again."

"Well, after breakfast, we sat cozily by the fire to have a nice long talk about our plans for the coming year. I just took up the paper to glance at the advertisements for the next day, and he went looking for his pipe—you know he is miserable without it—and he couldn't remember where he had left it the night before. Suddenly an idea came to me. New Year's day is the time to give up bad habits; now, isn't it? At any rate, I felt it ought to be, and I told Mr. Smithson he smoked too much; he admitted that he did. 'It is a bad habit,' I told him, 'dirty, expensive and injurious to health.' He admitted that it was. Then, why not give it up, to-day, and



GAVE ME TWENTY DOLLARS.

make a good beginning for the year? He refused at first to listen, but finally said he'd do it. It would be a good chance, he said, to show his strength of will, and, anyhow, it was only an ideal! Why, a blind man couldn't enjoy it, because he couldn't see the smoke—that showed it was only an idea—and why should a sensible man be the slave of such an idea. Why, it was silly!"

"Of course, you applauded that!"

"I did, and he went off, delighted to count up how much he would save during the year by not smoking. As for me, I improved the time by making notes of the bargains advertised in the papers and mapping out a shopping tour for the next day which would keep me until six o'clock and bring me home exhausted. Mr. Smithson didn't come back for two hours and when he did, he was cross. I tried to interest him in the advertisements, when he suddenly turned on me, saying that I spent more time and money, as well as wasting more health, on bargain hunting than he did on tobacco, and if he could give up the one, he thought I could give up the other!"

"Oh, but that was different!"

"Indeed it was, and so I told him, but he wouldn't listen. He said I was in the habit of spending five dollars' worth of time to save five cents in money. He reminded me that I had a quantity of things put away upstairs which I had bought because they were cheap and which I could never use; he proved that many bargains had shown themselves dear and said I could save more money by remaining at home and seeing to the house. When I demurred, he quoted my own arguments in regard to smoking until I got mad, said I had as much strength of mind as he had and I wouldn't buy a bargain for a year!"

"Oh, gracious, but how can you—"

"Well, everything went wrong that day. Mr. Smithson was cross and criticized the dinner until the girl got mad. Mrs. Trotter came in and told me that Blank was to have a bargain sale in curtains—I needed curtains for the bedrooms. My sister came in with a new box, bought at a bargain, and told me I could get its mate. Going into the parlor for one more peep at Blank's advertisement I found Mr. Smithson chewing the stem of his empty pipe!"

"It's too bad; I'm on my way to a ribbon sale now, and I thought you—"

"Wait till I get my wraps. You see, the next morning I thought I'd just run downtown to merely look at the sales, and I went into the parlor before breakfast to tell Mr. Smithson. I found him smoking. He looked foolish for a moment, then gave me \$20 and asked me if

NOT SUCH A FUNNY THING

Drummer's Joke on Waiter
Out a Costly One On Himself.

"I suppose there comes to every desire to do something smart on occasion," said the drummer, as a waiter placed his smile, according to New York Times.

"Well, such a desire came to me was leaving a certain southern city a week's stay. The waiter at my hotel had called me 'General' and been a pains to care for me and I made mind to reward him with a \$5 bill, a counterfeit with which I had been but I thought it would be the biggest of a joke to work off on Bob."

"I had got a hundred miles away I was arrested on a telegram for counterfeit money, and when taken I was arraigned in a United States and had to give bail and appear on different occasions. I had a lawyer, other expenses, lost a good three altogether and just escaped prison skin of my teeth. In addition to had to make good to the waiter, who rowfully shook his head when he the money and said: 'I'm sorry for you, General, but be de means of savin' your conscience soul from the gallus!'"

JUST LIKE PRISON ROU

Boastful Traveler Brought to a
by a Very Embarrassing Question.

The scene was a third-class compartment, five on a side. The was stout, florid, with short-cut gr and was very self-satisfied. The innate degeneracy of modern youth was his theme, relates London Tit-Bits.

"Look at me! Sixty years of age had a day's illness in my life, and my four miles an hour! Why? from when I was 23 to when I was 40 I lived a regular life. No day for me! No late hours! Every dinner and winter, I went to bed got up at five, lived principally ridge, worked hard—hard, mind ye eight to one, then dinner, then at walking exercise, and then—"

"Beg your pard'n, guv'nor," into a young working man sitting "but wot was you in for?"

Too Much to Expect.

"See here, landlord, must I sit here ever before I get the half chicken have ordered?"

"Oh, no, sir! I'm only wait somebody comes and orders the of Of course, I can't kill a half a chicken flyinge Blagetter."

Further Explanation Needed

Possible Purchaser—What is t of this painting?

Artist—That is "A Ship in a Storm." It's wonderfully effective and Would-h-m—would you mind to which is the ship and which is the —Chicago Tribune.

Real Acting.

Old Friend—Is your part very to play?

Barnstormer—Well, rather! I on one meal a day and playing of a man with the goat!—Detroit Press.

Enough for Her.

Myra—But I am told your fiancé education.

Isabel—Oh, yes, he has. He sign checks for at least half a Chicago Daily News.

Found at Last.

Hensley, Ark., Dec. 24th.—(S That a cure for Backache was priceless boon to the people, and the women of America, is admitted interest in medical matters, and Williams of this place is certain found in Dodd's Kidney Pills looked-for cure.

"I am 38 years old," Mrs. Williams "and have suffered with the Backache for three or four years. I treated by good physicians and got but thanks to God, I have found it and it is Dodd's Kidney Pills taken only one box and it has done good than all the doctors in three years. I want all sufferers from to know that they can get Dodd's Pills and get well."

Backache is one of the first signs of Kidney Disease. Guard against it by using Dodd's Kidney Pills.

If a man shows genius in maintaining thousands of his fellow we give him rank, high pay, adulation, but leave those who by unselfish toil with meager remuneration bring benefits to all mankind to unrecognized and unrewarded.—Enquirer.

BEAUTIFUL SKIN

Soft White Hands and Lustrous Hair Produced by Cuticle Soap.

Millions of Women Use Cuticle Soap, assisted by Cuticle Ointment, skin cure, for preserving, purifying the skin, for clearing scalp of crusts, scales and dandruff, the stopping of falling hair, for whitening and soothing red, sore hands, for baby rashes, itchy chafings, for annoying irritation, curative weaknesses, and many purposes which readily suggest themselves, as well as for all the purposes of the toilet and nursery.

There is a wide difference between voting machine and machine for one resembles, mechanically, a voter, indicating money received; often registers cash disbursed, a function.—Youth's Companion.

A Guaranteed Cure for